



LOCAL HELP FOR PEOPLE WITH MEDICARE

ASK SHIP

YOUR MONTHLY MEDICARE Q&A

Q. I have a relative in need of opioid abuse treatment. She has Medicare. Does Medicare help pay for this kind of treatment?

A. Beginning in 2020, yes, Medicare offers coverage for opioid use disorder (OUD) treatment services. This can be especially important now as opioid-related hospitalizations increased by 34% from 2010 to 2015 in individuals over 65.

This coverage will be available for those who have Medicare Part B (Medical Insurance).

Although private and state insurance had sometimes covered opioid addiction treatment, Medicare historically has not.

The comprehensive services provided in an opioid treatment program address recovery in a way that treats the whole person.

Under Parts B or D, Medicare currently covers certain medications for medication-assisted treatment (MAT), including buprenorphine, buprenorphine-naloxone combination products, and extended-release injectable naltrexone.

Medicare will cover in person and virtual delivery of counseling and therapy services provided by Opioid Treatment Programs. This will also broaden services for those living in rural areas who are often the hardest hit by the opioid crisis.

Under the newly covered OUD benefit, Medicare will cover:

- U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved opioid agonist and antagonist medication-assisted treatment (MAT) medications
- Dispensing and administration of MAT medications (if applicable)
- Substance use counseling

- Individual and group therapy
- Toxicology testing
- Intake activities
- Periodic assessments

If you or someone you know has questions about Medicare's coverage of opioid treatment or any other Medicare questions, call SHIP at 1-800-452-4800, 1-866-846-0139 TDD or online at www.medicare.in.gov. You can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.